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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/804,975	03/13/2001	Heinz Mueller	7040-24	9365

7590

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EXAMINER

STEWART, ALVIN J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 03/20/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

N.K.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/804,975

Applicant(s)

MUELLER ET AL.

Examiner

Alvin J Stewart

Art Unit

3738

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 February 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-58 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-58 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07/05/01 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

Request for Continued Examination

The request filed on February 07, 2003 for a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114 based on parent Application No. 09/804,975 is acceptable and a RCE has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the use of the words “comprising”, “comprises”, “means”, etc. Applicant should avoid legal phraseology words. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b). The above criticisms are not exhaustive. Applicant should carefully revise the abstract.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the meaning of the word “period” is not understood. The Examiner is having difficulties in understanding the term “period” because the meaning of the word “period” is too broad and it can be interpreted in many ways. For example, the Applicant discloses the word “period” in paragraphs 07, 17, 19, 26, etc. (e.g., in paragraph 26, “...at least half a period of the edge contour.”) in order to describe some type of distance. For the above reasons, the Applicant has to clarify this and for the moment the phrase “at least half a period” has been interpreted as any distance. The above criticisms are not exhaustive. Applicant should carefully revise the disclosure.

Appropriate correction is required.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because they fail to show “the tubular portions 8” supposedly shown in Figures 5 and 6 as described in paragraph 43 of the specification. Any structural detail that is essential for a proper understanding of the disclosed

invention should be shown in the drawing. MPEP § 608.02(d). A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance. The above criticisms are not exhaustive. Applicant should carefully revise the drawings.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5 and 7-58 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 12-55, and 57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 12-53 recite the limitation "the first connecting means". There are insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moriuchi et al US Patent 5,879,381.

Moriuchi et al discloses a catheter (see Figure 11) and a stent (17) (see Fig. 9) comprising a plurality of tubular portions (18a-18h), connecting bars (19a-19g) and cell-shaped elements (see attachment). The tubular portions are adjacently arranged in the longitudinal direction and comprise a plurality of interconnected cell-shaped elements which are connected in the longitudinal direction by the connecting bars and connected around the periphery of the stent by way of second connecting means (21). The end of the elements defines an edge contour extending around the stent in a wave-like configuration. The two-edge contour of one of the tubular portions extends in in-phase relationship with each other and engages into each other in the manner of a tooth configuration (see attachment). The connecting bars are *substantially* parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent.

The claims disclosed above are given their broadest reasonable interpretation. In re Pearson, 181 USPQ 641 (CCPA 1974).

In claim 1, line 5, the word “substantially” has been interpreted broadly and does not provide any indication as to what range of specific activity is covered. The Examiner has interpreted the brief inclination of the connecting bar (19a) of the Moriuchi et al reference as been substantially parallel to the longitudinal direction. However, the Applicant discloses in the specification that the connecting bars can be of a different configuration and/or arrangement (see Applicant’s specification, paragraph 38).

Regarding claims 4, and 12-14, the Examiner interpreted the phrase “same orientation” as the parallel orientation made by the longitudinal axes of each element to the longitudinal axis of the stent (see page 10, paragraph 36).

Regarding claims 47-53, the phrase "half a period" has been interpreted as the distance from the peak of one element end to the valley of the same element end (see attachment).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 9, 54-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moriuchi et al US Patent 5,879,381 in view of Kranz US Patent 5,968,093.

Moriuchi et al discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Moriuchi et al does not disclose second connecting means having a S-shape and/or an inclination.

Kranz teaches a plurality of cell-shaped elements connected one to the others in the peripheral direction by a plurality of second connecting means (11') having a S-shape for the purpose of minimizing the deformation of the stent (see col. 6, lines 26-28 and Fig. 3). Additionally, the second S-shape connecting means facing the same peripheral direction of elements in mutually adjoining relationship in the longitudinal direction of the stent are arranged inclinedly in opposite relationship with respect to the peripheral direction (see Figure 3).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the straight second connecting means of the Kranz reference with the S-shape second connecting means of the Moriuchi et al reference in order to minimize the deformation of the stent during expansion (see col. 6, lines 26-28).


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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J Stewart whose telephone number is 703-305-0277. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 703-308-2111. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3590 for regular communications and 703-308-2708 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.


Alvin Stewart
March 18, 2003

